

**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT
REGULAR WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2023
6:00P.M.**

1. OPENING

1.1 Call to Order

Council President McCarthy called the meeting to order at 6:05p.m.

1.2 Roll Call

Present: Councilmember Donovan Bilbro, Councilmember Monica Higgs, Councilmember Hope Love, Council President Shireka McCarthy, Mayor Kelly Porter, Councilmember Gerald Raynor, Sr., Councilmember Kizzie Scott (Late), Councilmember James Wright

Staff: LaShaya Johnson, Staff Assistant, Myneca Ojo, City Manager, and Pearl Umoh, Public Engagement Manager

1.3 Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:

The invocation was given by Apostle Steadman.

1.4. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda.

Motion by James Wright, Jr., second by Gerald Raynor Sr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Monica Higgs, Hope Love, Gerald Raynor Sr, Kizzie Scott, Shireka McCarthy, James Wright Jr., Donovan Bilbro

2. PRESENTATIONS

2.1. None

3. REPORTS

3.1 Mayor's Report

- Mayor Porter stated that his report can be found in Board Docs, and it details the meeting he attended in the month of July.
- Mayor Porter stated that he attended the council meetings for the month of July.

- Mayor Porter stated that he had a meeting with Delegate Harrison on June 20, 2023.
- Mayor Porter stated that he had met with Senator Benson, Herbert Allen, Delegate Lewis and Proctor and Associates in the month of July.
- Mayor Porter stated that he did not attend any conference in the month of July.
- Mayor Porter stated that he did not present any proclamations in the month of July.
- Mayor Porter stated that he presented a proclamation to Apostle Steadman.
- Mayor Porter stated that he did not have any speaking engagements or recommend any legislation for the month of July.

3.2 City Manager Report

- Ms. Ojo stated that she is pleased to provide the report for the months of July and August with the efforts to transform the operations and enhance community engagement.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she and Mayor Porter met with key representatives including Delegate Lewis and Delegate Harrison, Senator Benson, and Congressman Glenn Ivey.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the city initiated “First Friday” events to connect locals with businesses and plans to continue them until December 2023, and resume in April 2024.
- Ms. Ojo stated that Seat Pleasant Police Department collaborated with the community for the National Night Out
- Ms. Ojo stated that the crucial positions were filled in administration, particularly in the Finance and Environmental Justice Departments.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the city made progress in securing permits and incorporating value engineering into affordable housing projects, reflecting post-pandemic cost adjustments without compromising quality.
- Ms. Ojo stated that Council President McCarthy’s efforts secured \$285,000 for beautification and social services, reflecting Seat Pleasant’s commitment to its residents and their well-being.

Council Committee Reports

3.5 Finance & Budget Committee-Councilmember Love

- Finance & Budget Committee-Councilmember Love stated that FY20 audit progress report revealed challenges in accounts and balances verification, particularly regarding city investments, causing discrepancies with Bank of America's records. The anticipated completion date of July 30, 2023, has been postponed. Ms. Betty Logan suggested a forensic audit to address systemic issues and documentation gaps, emphasizing potential consequences for the city's financial standing.
- Councilmember Love stated the Committee discussed issues related to a lack of regular bank reconciliation, inaccuracies in Bank of America's investment records, and questionable transactions totaling \$39,000. Additionally, a credit card with a \$50k to \$100k limit for travel expenses was proposed.
- Councilmember Love stated that the City owes \$200k in employer tax liability, necessitating a meeting with ADP for resolution. To streamline processes, a Check Request form for travel advances and reimbursements was recommended. Harmonizing the updated trial balance with auditor expectations was also emphasized. The need to address these matters with the full Council was stressed.

3.6 Governmental Affairs & Technology Committee – Councilmember Raynor

- Councilmember Raynor stated that the Committee approved revisions to the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual, which were based on recommendations from the Government Affairs and Technology Committee Meeting on June 9, 2023. These approved changes are now ready for review by the City Attorney.
- Councilmember Raynor stated that the Committee also proposed a revision for the Personnel Appeals Board, suggesting that their decisions should be documented in writing and directed to both the City Council and HR. However, due to personnel matters and the current City Code, it was decided that all Personnel Appeals Board decisions should align with the existing code by being addressed to the City Manager and HR, with an ordinance amendment proposed by Ms. Lanham.

- Councilmember Raynor stated the Committee discussed compensation for the Personnel Appeals Board, which conflicted with the current code, and recommended aligning it with the approved Annual Budget under the HR Department's purview, with adjustments to the City Code accordingly.

3.8. Public Safety Committee-Councilmember Higgs

- Councilmember Higgs stated that the Committee met with Chief Harris to discuss the creation of Mutual Aid Agreements with neighboring cities, as the absence of such agreements has hindered access to profiles and camera feeds. They recommend establishing these agreements to enhance emergency coordination and resource sharing. Additionally, Chief Harris discussed the potential for a Criminal Investigation Unit to handle lower-level crimes, with a focus on collaboration with Prince George's County for major crimes.
- Councilmember Higgs stated that the Committee also addressed the need to replace destroyed camera towers, considering additional funding for FY24. They recommended assessing the city's financial status with Ms. Myneca Ojo before proceeding with an Automated Enforcement Program.

4. CITIZEN COMMENTS

4.1. Ms. Hollis stated that she applied for the program for residents to help with the utilities and was told that they must get employment to receive assistance to be qualified for the program when asked for the application for verification. She has proof of income; she never received the letter regarding it. Due to getting employment, she was penalized, and her check is now being reduced. She has requested the paperwork to show the guidelines. She quit the job because of the penalty for her social security disability. She wants to know if the paperwork says proof of employment or proof of income. There is a sign that blocks the interaction in front of her house and it's causing a traffic solution. She wants to know when it will be handled.

5. LEGISLATION

5.1 Ordinance O- 24-02 Amendment of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget for NCC Division Transfer 1st Reading.

- Ordinance O-24-02 Amendment of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 for NCC Division Transfer was introduced by the City Council and read by Ms. Johnson on Tuesday, September 5, 2023.

5.2 Ordinance O-24-03 Amendment of Chapter 30-Personnel Appeals Board 1st Reading

- Ordinance O-24-03 Amendment of Chapter 30-Personnel Appeals Board was introduced by the City Council and read by Ms. Johnson on Tuesday, September 5, 2023.

5.3 Resolution R-24-03 To Support and Promote Homeownership and Affordable Housing Initiative.

- Resolution R-24-03 To Support and Promote Homeownership and Affordable Housing was introduced by the City Council and read by Ms. Johnson on Tuesday, September 5, 2023.
- Motion to Approve Resolution R-24-03 To Support and Promote Homeownership and Affordable Housing Initiative
- Motion by Donovan K Bilbro, second by James Wright Jr.
- Final Resolution: Motion Carried
- Yes: Monica Higgs, Hope Love, Gerald Raynor Sr, Kizzie Scott, Shireka McCarthy, James Wright Jr, Donovan K Bilbro

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 None

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1. Nomination of Environmental Justice Director

- Motion to accept Michael Barber as the Environmental Justice Director
- Motion by Donovan K Bilbro, second by Hope Love.
- Final Resolution: Motion Carried
- Yes: Monica Higgs, Hope Love, Gerald Raynor Sr, Shireka McCarthy, James Wright Jr, Donovan K Bilbro
- Abstain: Kizzie Scott

7.2 Nomination of Council President

- Motion to nominate Donovan Bilbro for Council President

- Motion by Hope Love, second by James Wright Jr.
- Final Resolution: Motion Failed
- Yes: Hope Love, James Wright Jr, Donovan K Bilbro
- Abstain: Monica Higgs, Gerald Raynor Sr, Kizzie Scott, Shireka McCarthy

7.3 Nomination of Council Vice President

- **Motion to nominate Shireka McCarthy as Council Vice President**
 - Motion by Monica Higgs, second by James Wright Jr.
 - Final Resolution: Motion Carried
 - Yes: Monica Higgs, Gerald Raynor Sr, Shireka McCarthy, Donovan K Bilbro
 - No: Hope Love
 - Abstain: Kizzie Scott, James Wright Jr
- **Motion to nominate Hope Love as Council Vice President**
 - Motion by Donovan K Bilbro, second by James Wright Jr.
 - Final Resolution: Motion Carried
 - Yes: Hope Love, Gerald Raynor Sr, James Wright Jr, Donovan K Bilbro
 - No: Monica Higgs, Shireka McCarthy
 - Abstain: Kizzie Scott

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 8.1. Ward III Community Ward Walk, Friday, September 8, 2023, Save-A-Lot Parking Lot-5933 Martin Luther King Jr, Seat Pleasant, MD at 6:00 p.m.**
- 8.2. City Council Retreat, Saturday, September 9, 2023, Seat Pleasant City Hall-Council Chambers, 6301 Addison Rd., Seat Pleasant, MD 20743 from 9:00 am-5:00 pm**
- 8.3. Public Session, Monday, September 11, 2023, Hybrid and by Zoom Video at 7:00 pm. Meeting link details will be on the city's website, 6301 Addison Rd., Seat Pleasant, MD**
- 8.4. Ward V Community Ward Walk, Wednesday, September 20, 2023, Seat Pleasant City Hall-6301 Addison Rd., Seat Pleasant, MD at 6:00 p.m.**

- 8.5. Ward IV Community Yard Sale, Saturday, September 23, 2023, from 8:30 am-2:30 pm. A Yard Permit is required and can be obtained from the City's website. There will not be a fee for the Yard Permit.**
- 8.6. Regular Work Session, Monday, October 2, 2023, Hybrid and by Zoom Webinar at 6:00 pm, Meeting Link details are available on the city's website, 6301 Addison Rd., Seat Pleasant, MD**
- 8.7. Public Session, Monday, October 9, 2023, Hybrid and by Zoom Video at 7:00 pm. Meeting Link details will be on the city's website. 6301 Addison Rd., Seat Pleasant, MD**

9. ADJOURN

9.1 The meeting adjourned at 7:05pm

Respectfully submitted,

DocuSigned by:

Dashaun N. Lanham

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Dashaun N. Lanham, MMC
City Clerk